

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-11

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INFO USMISSION GENEVA

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ATHENS 5243

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, GR

SUBJECT: LABOR: MINISTER OF LABOR STRESSES GOG
COMMITMENT TO FREE TRADE UNIONISM

1. NEWLY-APPOINTED MINISTER OF LABOR CONSTANTINE LASKARIS STATED JULY 30 THAT THE CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT IS "STRONGLY DEVOTED TO THE FULL RESTORATION OF TRADE UNION LIBERTIES". LASKARIS ADDED THAT GREECE WILL RESPECT ITS OBLIGATIONS RELATIVE TO THE PROVISIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LABOR AGREEMENTS WHICH HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY RATIFIED BY THE GOG.

2. DURING COURSE OF PAST WEEK, NUMBER OF OFFICIALS FROM BOTH GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF GREEK WORKERS (GSEE) AND ITS MEMBER FEDERATIONS AND UNIONS HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR "CONCERN" TO EMBOFF THAT NEW CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT WILL EITHER INDIRECTLY "PRESSURE" MANY OF THEIR NUMBER TO RESIGN (SINCE THEY TAINTED BY ASSOCIATION WITH PRIOR PAPADOPOULOS AND ANDROUTSOPOULOS REGIMES) OR DIRECTLY INTERVENE THROUGH PROMULGATING LEGISLATION CALLING FOR NEW
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ELECTIONS IN GSEE WITH VIEW TOWARDS CHANGING

ORIENTATION OF NATIONAL LABOR LEADERSHIP. THESE SAME OFFICIALS HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR "FEARS" THAT COMMUNIST PARTY CADRES WILL EXPLOIT ANY SUCH NEW "FREEDOM" IN LABOR SECTOR AND WILL ATTEMPT TO SECURE INFLUENCE AND -- WHERE POSSIBLE -- CONTROL OF MAJOR LABOR GROUPINGS. IT MIGHT WELL BE THROUGH THE LABOR SECTOR--THESE SPOKESMEN ASSERT--THAT THE COMMUNIST CADRES MIGHT FIRST BE ABLE TO SECURE A FOOTHOLD IN THE NATIONAL POWER STRUCTURE BY WHICH THEY CAN HAVE A VOICE IN DETERMINING DIRECTION OF NATIONAL DOMESTIC POLICY.

3. COMMENT. WHILE EXPRESSIONS OF "FEAR AND CONCERN" OF THESE GREEK LABOR OFFICIALS ARE IN LARGE DEGREE SELF-SERVING AND TENDENTIOUS, IT NEVERTHELESS LIKELY THAT LABOR SECTOR--FOR SO LONG DORMANT--WILL PRESENT ATTRACTIVE TARGET OF OPPORTUNITY FOR LEFTIST FORCES SEEKING A QUICK "ENTREE" INTO THE NATIONAL POLITICAL LIFE.

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